

The President's News Conference With President Megawati Sukarnoputri  
of Indonesia in Bali, Indonesia  
October 22, 2003

*President Megawati.* President George Bush and I have just concluded the meeting. I have met with His Excellency, the President, several times. Our last meeting was in New York on 23d September, 2003, when we attended the 58th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

I attach great importance of my personal relation with President Bush as well as of bilateral relations between Indonesia and the United States, for both are the large democratic countries in the world and have great potential of cooperation.

We started our meeting today by conducting bilateral talks. It was followed by working luncheon attended by a number of members of the Cabinet. During the talks, we have discussed issues of common concern, namely: counterterrorism; U.S. support to the democratization and reform process in Indonesia; military cooperation; U.S. support to the territorial integrity and national unity of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia; and renunciation to any terrorist movement in the country; U.S. support to the Indonesian economy through a—[inaudible]—free process, particularly in the post-IMF program; and cooperation in the field of education in Indonesia.

In addition, we have exchanged our view of various regional and international issues, among others, on the latest development in Asia and the situation in the Middle East, despite the fact that we do not always share common perspective. But we both continue to hold mutual understanding that it is to the interest of the two countries to maintain consultation and cooperation in the pursuit of global peace.

Following bilateral talks and lunch, I accompanied President Bush in his meeting with some eminent leading figures from Islam, Hindu, and Christian. I regard this particular meeting as positive development

as the Indonesian religion figures had the opportunity to conduct open and direct dialog with the leader of the U.S. administration. I am pleased to note that both sides were in agreement about the importance of religion tolerance as one of the major pillars of democracy in Indonesia.

My current meeting with President Bush might be the last before the two countries carry out general election in 2004. We will continue to foster cordial and cooperative bilateral relations.

May I now invite President George W. Bush to present his remarks. Thank you.

*President Bush.* Thank you, Madam President. Good afternoon. Thank you very much. Laura and I are honored to be in Indonesia, the world's third largest democracy and the world's—home to the world's largest Muslim population. Indonesia is a vital partner, and Indonesia is a friend of America. We share a commitment to democracy and tolerance. We stand together against terrorism. I thank President Megawati for her leadership, for her friendship, and for her hospitality today.

The success of Indonesia as a pluralistic and democratic state is essential to the peace and prosperity of this region. Indonesians profess many faiths and honor many traditions. And like Americans, you understand that diversity can be a source of strength. Your national motto, "Unity in diversity," sounds a lot like our own, "Out of many, one." Americans admire the way Indonesians maintain unity and balance modern ideas with ancient traditions and deep religious faith.

More than 200 years ago, the Founders of my country recognized and protected the essential role of religion in society within a democratic and pluralistic constitution. Your constitution affirms the same inalienable right of all to worship freely, a gift

from your founders that enriches the Indonesian nation to this day.

Earlier, just minutes ago, we met with five Indonesian religious leaders, including leaders of Indonesia's two largest Islamic organizations, who are sustaining Indonesia's tradition of tolerance and moderation. Americans hold a deep respect for the Islamic faith, which is professed by a growing number of my own citizens. We know that Islam is fully compatible with liberty and tolerance and progress, because we see the proof in your country and in our own.

Terrorists who claim Islam as their inspiration defile one of the world's great faiths. Murder has no place in any religious tradition. It must find no home in Indonesia.

Nearly 3 months ago, America shared Indonesia's grief when a suicide bomber killed 14 people outside a Jakarta hotel. One year ago, miles from where we now stand, Indonesia suffered the worst terrorist attack in its history when over 200 innocent men and women lost their lives. Today we pay tribute to the victims. We remember the suffering of their families, and we reaffirm our commitment to win the war on terror.

President Megawati has confronted this evil directly. She was one of the first leaders to stand with me after September the 11th. Under her leadership, Indonesia is hunting and finding dangerous killers. America appreciates Indonesia's strong cooperation in the war on terror. America believes that freedom and democracy are critical to defeating terror, because free nations that respect human rights do not breed hatred, resentment, and the ideologies of murder.

The United States is working for democracy and freedom and economic progress in Afghanistan and Iraq, to lift millions out of poverty, to overcome years of brutal repression, to help create a more secure and safe world. And the United States strongly supports a healthy democracy in Indonesia,

for the sake of your own people and for the sake of peace.

Indonesians have made good progress over the last 5 years in strengthening democracy and in building the civil institutions that sustain freedom. Next year, your country will reach an important milestone when some 150 million Indonesians vote in the nation's first-ever elected—Presidential election. The United States is working with Indonesia to support these historic elections. In a short time, Indonesia has traveled far down the road to full democracy, and Indonesians should be proud of this accomplishment.

We'll also support Indonesia's efforts to build an education system that teaches values and discourages extremism. I will propose to our Congress a 6-year, \$157 million program to support basic education in Indonesia.

The partnership between our two peoples is strong and is growing stronger. In all that lies ahead, in the defense of freedom, in the advance of tolerance and democracy, Indonesia will have a firm ally in the American Government, and you'll have the friendship and the respect of the American people.

Thank you, Madam President.

*President Megawati.* Thank you.

*President Bush.* I think we'll take a couple of questions—is that not true—from—alternating both sides?

*President Megawati.* Yes.

*President Bush.* Would you like to call on somebody first? I'll call on him. You call on—[laughter]—you sure you want to call on him? [Laughter] Okay.

#### *U.S. Middle East Policy*

*Q.* Mr. President, some of the religious leaders that you just met with have said that U.S. foreign policy is biased toward Israel and against Muslims, making it easy for the terrorists to find recruits. How do you answer those charges, and how do you deal with that situation?

*President Bush.* Our foreign policy is for a—development of a Palestinian state that lives side by side with Israel in peace. And I'm the first President to ever articulate such a vision, and I still believe it is possible. In order to achieve a Palestinian state living side by side in peace, there needs to be leadership willing to fight off the terror that is trying to prevent the state from emerging.

#### *U.S. Foreign Policy Goals*

*Q.* I would like to ask question in Indonesian. Because your visit to Indonesia has been opposed by many people, what is your views? And is there a possibility of a change in your foreign policy view, which is seen as imbalanced toward the Islamic world?

*President Bush.* Well, I strongly believe in peace and freedom. I think it's important for the world to be as free as possible, and I strongly believe that free nations are peaceful nations. And my foreign policy promotes that.

America is also a compassionate nation. We lead the world in helping feed the hungry and battle disease. I look forward to working with the President in terms of allowing Indonesians to use our money to help implement an education system that the Government decides, not America. No, I'm proud of our foreign policy.

*President Megawati.* Can I still add something? Because you also spontaneously accepted the invitation of—my invitation to come to Indonesia, which proves that he is very open to come to this country of ours in this spontaneous way.

#### *North Korea/Iran*

*Q.* North Korea is rejecting your offer as laughable and still insisting on a non-aggression treaty. How do you proceed from here? And are you confident that Iran is forswearing nuclear weapons?

*President Bush.* Well, first of all, I want to thank the Foreign Ministers from Great Britain and France and Germany and their Governments for taking a very strong uni-

versal message to the Iranians that they should disarm. The Iranians have—it looks like they are accepting the demands of the free world, and now it's up to them to prove that they've accepted the demands. That's a very positive development.

On terms of North Korea, we had a really good visit at APEC about how best to resolve the North Korean issue peacefully, how best to convince the North Koreans to disarm, at least abandon their nuclear ambitions—nuclear weapons ambitions. And we had good progress in Bangkok. And there's going to be a series of these statements that I guess are trying to stand up to the five nations that are now united in convincing North Korea to disarm. And my only reaction is we'll continue to send the very clear message to the North Koreans. The good news is that there's other nations besides America now sending the message.

*Q.* [Inaudible]—is that helping the climate?

*President Bush.* Launching missiles into the sea? No, of course, not. Look, the guy, he—we'll determine whether he's serious or not. He wanted to have dialog; we're having dialog. And he wanted a security agreement, and we're willing to advance a multiparty security agreement, assuming that he is willing to abandon his nuclear weapons designs and programs. And we'll just stay the course.

Wait a minute, you're crowding out the host press. This is unbelievable. [Laughter] This is unilateralism at its worst. I've never heard—[laughter]—two and two, Stretch [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News]. Sorry.

#### *President's Visit*

*Q.* Mr. President—

*President Bush.* Yes.

*Q.* —what is the message you would like to convey to the Indonesian people with this 3-hour visit, the shortest one that you make among the six-nation visit in this journey?

*President Bush.* Yes, well, first of all, it's been a—it might not have been very long,

but it's been very productive. And my message is, thank you for the hospitality, and thank you for the wonderful exchange we've had with the President.

I'm traveling to a lot of countries in a very quick period of time, and I appreciate the fact that the Indonesian Government was able to accommodate my desires to come here. And we've got a lot in common. We both appreciate democracy. We both care about trade so that our nations can prosper. We both care about educating people so that children have a chance to succeed in life. We both love freedom, and we both want the world to be peaceful. And we had a great exchange along those lines.

So my message to the Indonesian people is, thank you very much for the warm hospitality. And I want to thank the President for the warm hospitality as well.

Thank you all very much. That's it.

*President Megawati.* That's it?

*President Bush.* Unless you want to keep answering questions. [Laughter] I'll stay here as long as you want to.

*President Megawati.* No——

*President Bush.* You want to? Okay. [Laughter]

NOTE: The President's news conference began at 2:12 p.m. at Bali International Airport. In his remarks, President Bush referred to Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jack Straw of the United Kingdom; Minister of Foreign Affairs Dominique de Villepin of France; Minister of Foreign Affairs Joschka Fischer of Germany; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea. A portion of these remarks could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

## Joint Statement Between the United States of America and the Republic of Indonesia

*October 22, 2003*

President George W. Bush and President Megawati Soekarnoputri today reaffirmed a new era of cooperation between two of the world's largest democracies and reviewed the shared values and common challenges that join them in friendship. They welcomed the excellent progress in implementing the Joint Statement of September 19, 2001. They also expressed satisfaction that the relationship between their two democracies continues to grow and strengthen. President Megawati emphasized the importance of President Bush's visit.

President Bush expressed the strong support of the United States for Indonesia's democratic transition and reforms, and welcomed Indonesia's progress toward becoming a mature and stable democracy. Both Presidents agreed that, as the most populous majority-Muslim nation, Indonesia is

a powerful example that democracy and Islam can go hand in hand.

President Bush noted Indonesia's substantial economic recovery in recent years and pledged to support continued economic development as Indonesia successfully ends its program with the IMF at the end of this year. President Bush praised President Megawati's commitment to continue to press forward with difficult economic reforms, combat graft, and improve the investment climate. The two Presidents agreed that the long-standing trade and investment ties between their two countries have shown the benefits of an open trading system to Indonesia's development. The United States is the top market for Indonesia's non-oil and gas exports, and U.S. companies are major investors in Indonesia.